

Remarks

Claims 1-6 are now pending in this application. Applicants have amended claims 1 and 3 to clarify the claimed invention. Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of this application.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 3, 5 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent 5,333,242 to Watanabe et al. in view of U.S. patent 4,888,708 to Brantmark et al. and in view of U.S. patent 6,330,493 to Takahashi et al. The Examiner rejected claims 2 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Watanabe et al. in view of Brantmark et al.

The combination of Watanabe et al., Brantmark et al. and Takahashi et al. does not suggest the invention recited in claims 1, 3, 5 and 6 since, among other things, the combination does not suggest a system or method that includes selecting a leading manipulator from at least two manipulators, manually moving the leading manipulator utilizing a handheld control tool while the other manipulator(s) are moved synchronously with leading manipulator. The combination also does not suggest a common controller for controlling the manipulators or a hand-held controller.

Watanabe et al. suggests a method of setting a coordinate system of a second robot based on a coordinate system of a first robot. The second robot is "installed in substitution" for the first robot. Watanabe et al. does not suggest synchronous movement of robots, but rather replacing

one robot with another. Additionally, Watanabe et al. does not disclose a handheld robot control. Furthermore, Watanabe et al. does not disclose a control system for controlling both robots. Rather, Watanabe et al. discloses that each robot includes a separate control system.

While Brantmark et al. is cited as suggesting a handheld robot control. Such a robot control does not suggest moving a plurality of manipulators and/or external axes together in a synchronized manner when one of the manipulators/axes is moved with a handheld control tool or a control system for controlling multiple robots.

Takahashi et al. suggests a method for performing synchronous cooperation of a plurality of robots, each having a controller of its own. This is clear from Figs. 2 and 3, which illustrate a controller for each robot. Additionally, Fig. 1 illustrates one of the robot controllers, which clearly indicates that the controller is connected to another controller. Thus, Takahashi et al. also does not suggest a common controller for controlling a plurality of manipulators.

Additionally, Takahashi et al. only suggests carrying out synchronous cooperation of the robots during automatic operation of the robots and not during manual operation of the robot. Takahashi et al. suggests writing different programs for a master robot and slave robots. Each program is stored in a memory of each robot controller, as described at col. 5, line 63, through col. 6, line 40. The robots are moved synchronously when the programs are run in the controllers during automatic operation of the robots. Hence, Takahashi et al. also does not suggest manually moving a leading manipulator while other manipulator(s) are moved synchronously with leading manipulator.

Therefore, the combination of Watanabe et al., Brantmark et al. and Takahashi et al. does not suggest the invention recited in claims 1, 3, 5 and 6. Accordingly, the combination of Watanabe et al., Brantmark et al. and Takahashi et al. does not make the invention recited in claims 1, 3, 5 and 6 obvious. Consequently, Applicants submit that the invention recited in claims 1, 3, 5, and 6 is patentable over the combination of Watanabe et al., Brantmark et al. and Takahashi et al. and respectfully requests withdrawal of this rejection.

The combination of Watanabe et al. and Brantmark et al. does not suggest the invention recited in claims 2 and 4 since, among other things, the combination does not suggest a system or method that includes selecting a leading manipulator from at least two manipulators, manually moving the leading manipulator utilizing a handheld control tool while the other manipulator(s) are moved synchronously with leading manipulator. The combination also does not suggest a common controller for controlling a plurality of manipulators or a hand-held controller. As described above, Watanabe et al. suggests a method of setting a coordinate system of a second robot based on a coordinate system of a first robot in which the two robots are not moved synchronously. As noted above, the handheld robot control suggested by Brantmark et al. does not suggest moving a plurality of manipulators and/or external axes together in a synchronized manner when one of the manipulators/axes is moved with a handheld control tool or a control system for controlling multiple robots.

In view of the above, the combination of Watanabe et al. and Brantmark et al. does not suggest the invention recited in claims 2 and 4. Thus, the combination of Watanabe et al. and Brantmark et al. does not make the invention recited in claims 2 and 4 obvious. Accordingly,

Applicants submit that the invention recited in claims 2 and 4 is patentable over the combination of Watanabe et al. and Brantmark et al. and respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

In view of the above, the references relied upon in the office action do not suggest patentable features of the claimed invention. Therefore, the references relied upon in the office action do not make the claimed invention obvious. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections based upon the cited references.

In conclusion, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of this case and issuance of the Notice of Allowance.

If an interview would advance the prosecution of this case, Applicants urge the Examiner to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The undersigned authorizes the Commissioner to charge fee insufficiency and credit overpayment associated with this communication to Deposit Account No. 22-0261.

Respectfully submitted,

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/Eric J. Franklin/
Eric J. Franklin, Reg. No. 37,134
Attorney for Applicants
Venable LLP
575 Seventh Street, NW
Washington, DC 20004
Telephone: 202-344-4936
Facsimile: 202-344-8300